GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1436
ANSWERED ON:10.03.2008
SURVEY REGARDING SUBSCRIBERS OF MOBILE CONNECTIONS
Paraste Shri Dalpat Singh

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has become the fastest growing telecom market in the world;

(b) if so, the extent to which it has strengthened its growth during the last three years, as on date, Year-wise;

(c) whether the Government has conducted any survey regarding the total number of mobile subscribers in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to spread its number in the rural heartland?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) considering total number of telephone subscribers being added in each year, India is one of the fastest growing telecom markets in the world.

(b) The year-wise growth of telecom subscribers in the country during the last three years and for 2007-08 (upto January 2008) is as follows:

Year	Growth during the year
2004-05	28.52%
2005-06	44.44%
2006-07	44.89%
2007-08 (up to Jan-08)	36.80%

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

(e) The following steps are being taken by the Government to spread telephones in the rural areas:

(i) Support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for provisioning of Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) in all the 1685 net cost positive Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs).

(ii) USOF support for providing Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in 66,822 undisputed accessible and inhabited villages having population more than 100.

(iii) Support from USOF for the innovative scheme of sharing of infrastructure by USO Fund to set up 7871 number of infrastructure sites (towers) spread over 500 districts spread over 27 states, for provision of mobile services in the specified rural and remote areas, where there is no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage in the country.

(iv) Relaxation of norms by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) for laying cable upto 5 kms of exchanges against the earlier standard of 2.5 kms based on demand and techno-commercial consideration.

(v) Large-scale deployment of WLL network by BSNL in rural areas.

(vi) Deployment of Mobile Network along all the Highways by BSNL to give incidental coverage to large parts of rural areas.

(vii) In addition to the efforts made by BSNL, the private operators are also offering their services to meet the demand for telephone.